

MBTA closing multiple lines on weekends during fall semester

Stephanie Purifoy, Beacon Staff

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority scheduled widespread closures of sections of the T on weekends, starting in mid-September and finishing in December.

The Green, Orange, and Red lines all face shutdowns, according to a press release from the MBTA in August. It will provide shuttle buses to replace trains during these times.

The construction is part of an \$8 billion, five-year plan to modernize the trains.

On the Green Line, workers plan to replace 7,000 feet of track. The D branch will close every weekend from Sept. 14 to Dec. 29, and the B branch construction will take place during the weekends of Sept. 7, Nov. 2, and Nov. 23. C branch construction will occur on the weekend of Oct. 26. The E branch will not be affected.

On the Red Line, the MBTA plans to replace and add new signage and lighting fixtures, along with cleaning, painting, and repairing tile within the Park Street and Downtown Crossing stations. They will replace 1,800 feet of train tracks in both stations. The Red Line will close every weekend from Nov. 16 to Dec. 15 between the Kendall/MIT and Broadway stops. According to the press release, the closures will affect three out of every four Red Line users.

The MBTA also plans to close the Orange Line from Tufts Medical Center to Sullivan Square every weekend starting on Oct. 5 and finishing on Nov. 10. They plan to replace 2,250 feet of track within the Chinatown station and add new signage in the Haymarket and State stations.

See MBTA, page 4



Straight Pride Parade descends on campus

By Beacon Staff • p. 6-7

A police officer stares down a protester in front of City Hall following the Straight Pride Parade.
Lizzie Heintz / Beacon Correspondent

Alumnus' Adam Driver resemblance inspires comedic Instagram

Juliet Norman, Beacon Staff

While Ben Schifano vacationed in Disneyland last year, he agreed to strike a pose as Star Wars' Kylo Ren after a mother asked him to take a picture with her child. "You look just like Adam Driver!" she told him.

This was not the first time someone called Schifano a dead-ringer for the Star Wars actor—he'd heard comments like these ever since the 2012 premiere of HBO television show "Girls," where Driver played the amusing Adam Sackler.

Schifano '19 created an Instagram account dedicated to recreating photos of Driver and has amassed just under 600 followers. The account has one goal: for Driver to find the account and buy him a sandwich.

"I thought, what's a weird request I could have and what's the lowest thing I could ask for?" Schifano said in a phone interview from Phoenix, Arizona.

During his final semester at Emerson, Schifano took classes at Emerson's Los Angeles campus, where he held an internship at Dark Horse Entertainment. Schifano works as a server in Phoenix while he saves money to make the move back to Los Angeles.

Schifano said if Driver saw his account and agreed to buy him a sandwich, he would want Driver to order Schifano a sandwich that he himself would eat.

See Adam Driver, page 10



Freshmen move in to new Little Building

By Flora Li, p. 3

A student sits and reads in one of the Little Building floor common rooms.
Montse Landeros / Beacon Correspondent

Women's soccer looks to build on last year's playoff run

Andrew Lin, Beacon Staff

The women's soccer team faces the challenge of reconstruction with a smaller and younger roster following a historic 2018 season.

The Lions capped off last season with 11 wins and seven losses. The team defeated Babson College 1-0 in the quarterfinals of the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference, and lost against Springfield College 3-1 in the semifinals. The season marked the first time the Lions won a home playoff game. However, the team enters this season with a drastically different roster.

"I think one of the challenges we have is we have a younger team in general, so we have to bring that younger group together and play our style of soccer," head coach David Suvak said. "I think that there's probably a handful that will make an impact early on. I think we may have two or three [freshman] starters."

The Lions will start with 23 players this year instead of 30 from last year, with 11 of the 23 being freshmen.

"My first impression was that the freshmen are going to give us a run for our money and really help us push this team to the next level that we really want to get to," sophomore captain and goalkeeper Megan Rose said. "I think we have a really great freshman class this year, and I'm super excited to see—once we all start jelling together, running together, and working together—what this team can do."

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INSIDE THIS EDITION



The ethics of internet shopping in the digital age. **Pg. 9**



St. John's Prep spends \$2 million to renovate Emerson's baseball field. **Pg. 12**

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Page Two

Letter from the Editor

As another school year begins, I want to take a moment to address some changes both in our paper and on campus.

Little Building finally opened and Boylston Street is finally clear of scaffolding—something I never thought I’d see in my career at Emerson. On Tuesday night, I witnessed freshmen experience their first burnt popcorn evacuation from Little Building—I suppose the renovated residence hall had its baptism by fire.

I hope everyone survived their first day of classes. I struggled to roll out of bed, throw on clothes, and drag myself to Ansin. Nonetheless, the year is upon us and we must endure 14 weeks of homework, tests, quizzes, projects, and, of course, Dining Center food.

The Beacon, for its part, started operations several weeks before the academic year. I roused the editors from their summer slumber to put together the edition you are reading today. Our staff worked hard to bring students, faculty, and staff wall-to-wall coverage of the Straight Pride Parade and a 12-page edition—something not usually done for the first issue of an academic year.

This year, the Beacon, Student Government Association, Emerson Independent Video, and the EVVYs all emerged from the dim dungeons of Piano Row’s Campus Center and found ourselves in beautiful new offices located at 172 Tremont Street. With our third-floor corner office fully set up, I find that the paper has entered a new era with both new and returning staff members.

The office change got me thinking this summer. In my past two years on staff, I have always been one to push for innovation and argue to bring our coverage out of the Emerson hallways and into the real world. This semester I plan to do just that.

I look forward to expanding our metro and State House reporting while maintaining strong coverage of the Emerson College administration and student life. To do this, my managing editors and I decided to upgrade our website to allow for more engaging forms of storytelling. In our Straight Pride Parade coverage, we made an attempt to utilize stronger backend mechanics to create an inviting and informative front page.

You will also notice that the print edition looks different. We have gone through and changed the fonts for our copy, headlines, pull-quotes, and cutlines. I believe the new look is aesthetically pleasing and offers the reader a chance to imagine the Beacon in a different way.

Finally, you may have noticed the new logo the newspaper adopted in the past month. We have received many opinions on the new design. Some expressed discontent, others questioned whether the change was warranted, and some even said they hate it.

I will admit that the new flag, with its Gothic design, is reminiscent of the heyday of print news. To me, the Beacon’s new flag symbolizes the golden age of journalism. It is a legacy design with modern implications. The flag represents an attempt to move into the digital age while building a more serious brand. While we understand that change can be difficult, we are excited to enter this new era and continue to bring top quality news to our readers.

Sincerely,
Chris Van Buskirk, *Editor of The Berkeley Beacon*

Beacon Voices: How we reported on the Straight Pride Parade



Police form a barricade in front of counter protesters in City Hall.
Lizzie Heintz / Beacon Correspondent

Beacon Voices is a news series aimed at describing the reporting process behind some of The Beacon’s biggest stories. In this edition, we talked to reporters who covered the Straight Pride Parade.

Belen Dumont

We met at the Beacon office in the morning to check-in with our editor-in-chief, Chris, and news editor, Stephanie, and they assigned us to individual positions. I began the day by roaming around Emerson College and Boston Common, sending in updates every 30 minutes until the end of the parade. I kept in contact with the other reporters on the scene, and Chris and Stephanie at the newsroom, throughout the day. Sometimes, when they heard about arrests happening around the college, I’d rush to the area. I conducted interviews with protesters along Boylston Street and then followed the parade to City Hall when it passed by the college. I later assisted Anissa with covering the speakers at City Hall. The information I collected went into the live updates, but I’m glad I was also there to assist my talented peers with their own reporting.

Anissa Gardizy

On Saturday morning, I filmed a video of myself walking through the Common to Copley Square to pick up my press pass for the Straight Pride Parade. For some reason, I thought it would be a good idea to keep one, long Twitter thread updated throughout the day while I was following the parade. I figured that there wouldn’t be many sources giving updates from inside of the parade barricades. I kept my Twitter up to date with videos, photos, and text, while also sending updates and interviews to the Beacon editors who were in the newsroom. I also took pictures on my camera and switched out my SD card with Stephanie when the parade passed campus so that the other editors could begin publishing photos. Overall, my experience covering the parade was a great practice in being objective. I’m happy that I was able to ask parade participants questions without unintentionally offending them. I’m so proud of

every member of The Beacon who worked all day on our coverage! We had people following the coverage from multiple states!

Stephanie Purifoy

We all started off the morning in the office at 172 Tremont Street. Chris, Kyle, Aaron, and I stayed in the office and sent our reporters into the field with specific instructions about the day. We would listen to the police scanner and send reporters to locations of conflict, edit and publish updates, and go through photos as they were being sent. Our goal was to give our audience the best picture of what was happening with the parade, at City Hall where the protests were, and on campus. When something would happen near the office, one of us would sprint down to check it out and take pictures. While I have covered rallies and big events like this before, I’ve never been the editor in those situations, so it was pretty cool for me to watch how everything was playing out all around the city and to get the information from our own reporters. All in all, I think it was a really successful way to share the day’s events.

Jacob Seitz

I was originally covering a protest of the Straight Pride Parade that happened before the parade actually started at City Hall. I was roaming around the protest, interviewing protesters, organizers, and any Emerson students I could find. I would find a spot to send in updates every half hour when we had updates to give and space to give them. After the protest ended around 11:30 in the morning, I walked up to the corner of Tremont Street to the barricade by the Boylston MBTA station to get a good vantage point of the parade and watch it go by, taking pictures of my surroundings and live-Tweeting the whole thing. As the parade passed, I followed it down Tremont Street to City Hall, then stood with the protestors by the Holocaust Memorial. I was updating my editors, watching scuffles with police, and following them closely. After things died down, I went back to the newsroom and compiled all our reporting into the article with my colleagues.

Upcoming Events

Many students and organizations host events at Emerson and broadcast them on EmConnect’s event page or fliers on bulletin boards around campus. The Beacon’s Living Arts section went through the events for the next week and selected a few that seemed interesting.

Org Fair and Another Org Fair

Emerson’s annual Org Fair will be held Friday, Sept. 6 in the Bobbi Brown and Steven Plofker Gymnasium from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. Students can visit tables and learn about SGA-recognized organizations on campus. For organizations that have not yet been recognized by the SGA but still wish to attract interested students, Another Org Fair will be held from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Bill Bordy Theater.

Jazz Brunch

To finish out the Week of Welcome, Emerson’s Community Ambassadors will host a jazz brunch on Saturday, Sept. 7 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the dining center. A live jazz band will perform while students dine and rewind after the first week of classes. This event is open to all Emerson students, on or off-campus.

The O-Show

Presented by the Community Ambassadors and Musical Theatre Society, the O-Show will be held on Saturday, Sept. 7 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Cabaret. Performers from the Student Theatre Alliance will put on a short theatrical performance designed to welcome new students to Emerson.

Meal Swipe Donation Week

In order to support students who may be facing food insecurity, the Office of Student Success will sponsor a week of meal donations from Sept. 9 to Sept. 13. Students visiting the dining center can opt to donate one of their guest swipes. The office hopes to collect 500 meals by the end of the drive and also seeks volunteers to help collect swipes and spread the word about the program during the week.

Fraternity and Sorority Life Info Sessions

The Office of Student Engagement and Leadership will hold five informational sessions for those interested in learning more about fraternity and sorority life at Emerson. The first session will be on Thursday, Sept. 12 at 12:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, with four others slated for the following week. Attending one of these sessions is mandatory for any student planning to join a fraternity or sorority this semester.

Beacon Horoscopes

Written by Dasha German

Which new Whisky Saigon name are you based on your sign?

The Guild

Scorpio, Pisces

The Loft

Sagittarius, Aquarius

Lion’s Den

Taurus, Aries

Sidebar Cafe

Virgo, Cancer

Headline Cafe

Leo, Gemini

The Edit

Virgo, Capricorn

Want to get your full horoscope? Go to www.berkeleybeacon.com to view a full breakdown.

News

Little Building welcomes incoming freshman to campus after 2 years of construction



Move in assistants and orientation leaders help a freshmen move into a renovated Little Building. • Chris Van Buskirk / Beacon Staff

Flora Li, Beacon Staff

Decked in blue T-shirts and colorful makeup, orientation leaders danced on Boylston Street to welcome the first group of Little Building residents since its reopening.

More than 900 freshmen moved into the Little Building from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m on Monday and Tuesday. The move-in car line began outside of Piano Row on Boylston Street.

Students went inside to grab their key, guest passes, and student IDs when they reached the Little Building entrance on Boylston Street. Then cars turned onto Tremont Street, and families could drop off their student's belongings into carts. Move-in assistants and OLs who used the building's freight elevators helped to take the carts to their room.

Resident Director of the Little Building Britt Locklin compared the move-in process to a well-oiled machine.

"I didn't see many backups, maybe a car waited for ten minutes at most," she said.

Throughout the day, OLs shifted through multiple positions such as pushing carts, greeting families, and working the elevators.

"I love it," OL Reid Berman said. "We get to greet all the new students and we get to meet all of them ... so we know all of them even before orientation starts." Berman is a sophomore and it was his first OL experience.

An incoming freshman, Andrew Brooks, finished his move in with his family around 12 p.m. He said in an interview that he arrived at 8 a.m. and was surprised that the process only took four hours.

"I think it [the move in] is really well organized," Brooks said. "The people that greeted me were so nice, and we got everything done really fast. We filled everything in four carts in five minutes."

Brooks said even though Little Building was newly renovated and not yet finished, most parts of it were nicely done. The second floor of the Little Building is still under construction.

"I am so excited to live here and I cannot wait to start this semester," Brooks said.

Locklin said the Little Building's design is catered to first-year students.

"If you are walking to the back corner of a floor, you have to walk through the lounges or the cross-hallway, so you are going to run into

people and be able to interact with people," she said. "LB was designed with that experience in mind—the other buildings are great for older students that have established friend groups and social interactions."

The Little Building features singles, doubles, triples, and one suite on each floor.

Communal bathrooms are located on each floor. There are a female-identifying and male-identifying communal bathroom, and there is also an accessible and gender-neutral bathroom where one can close the door, similar to a suite bathroom.

Every odd-numbered floor holds a kitchen and two common rooms with desks and couches. Every even-numbered floor contains only three common rooms but also provides access to the lower level lounge via a small staircase.

Common spaces are either orange, green, or blue, Locklin said.

Orange rooms were designed as living rooms that have comfortable seating and social spaces. The kitchens, with stovetops, a refrigerator, and seating, are painted green. The blue rooms were designed as a quiet study space, with furniture such as pod chairs, which are semi-enclosed spaces.

Freshman Michael Isaacs said he likes the view through his window and clean carpets on the floor.

"I think that I am pretty lucky to have this [room] as a freshman," Isaacs said in an interview. "It's a historical landmark and at the same time it's fully renovated."

Around 90 students live on each floor of the Little Building, which is more than the other residence halls, Locklin said. About 55 students live on each floor of the Paramount Center, 25 in 2 Boylston Place, 50 in Piano Row, and 50 in the Colonial Building.

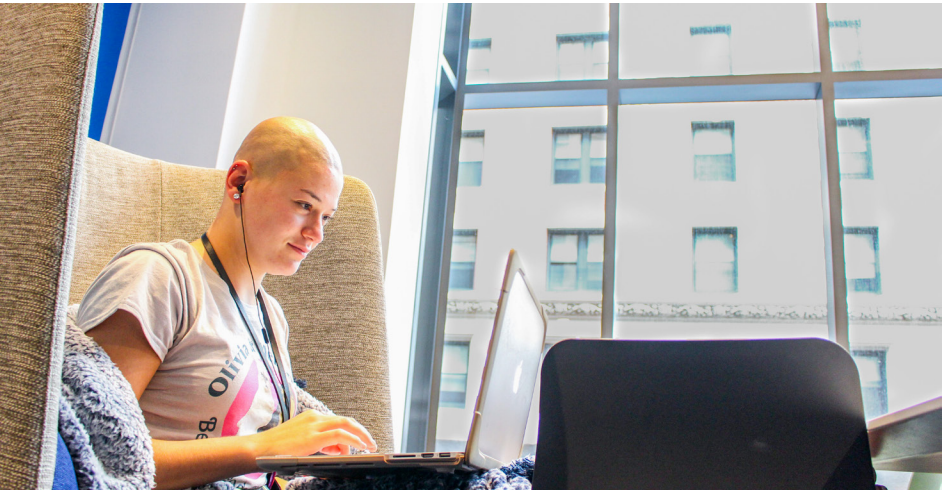
Because of the higher volume of students per floor, there are three RAs assigned to a group of about 30 students, and they work as a team, Locklin said.

"We are trying to keep the team aspect in mind," she said. "Ultimately, Emerson is a very team-oriented school, a lot of careers are not solitary experiences, [so] we are really trying to make a collaborative culture."

Max Straubinger, a Little Building RA who previously lived as a resident in the old Little Building, said the new Little Building is more



Students cook in the new common kitchens in the Little Building. Montse Landeros / Beacon Correspondent



A student uses their computer in one of the three common rooms featured on each floor. Montse Landeros / Beacon Correspondent

spacious and brighter than the old one.

"I felt like the whole building was falling apart around us while we were living in it," Straubinger said. "But this is a lot nicer now."

Straubinger said the Little Building now has common rooms facing Tremont Street, unlike the old ones which faced the Colonial Building. Also, the kitchens in the old Little Building didn't have fridges or tables.

"When I saw the new Little Building, my first thought was, it looks like they took 2B and the old Little Building and combined [them]," Straubinger said.

The Little Building also features more social space on each floor, Straubinger said. There was only one common room on each floor in the old Little Building. He said even though it could be challenging to take care of about 90 students on his floor with two other RAs, the space would make it easier to get to know his residents.

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News

College spends \$2 million for 200 extra seats in Dining

Anissa Gardizy, *Beacon Staff*

The college opened an extension to the Dining Center at 116 Boylston St. Wednesday following the departure of the Whisky Saigon nightclub in June.

The renovated space—named the Lion’s Den after receiving the most votes in a student survey — added about 8,000 square feet and 200 seats to the college’s existing dining space. The addition follows the re-opening of the Little Building which added 1,030 beds to campus and a new rule requiring third-year students to remain in on-campus dorms.

The space will begin food service once the college receives the proper permit, which should be within the next week or two, Vice President and Dean for Campus Life James Hoppe said. The college does not have plans to further expand dining services, Hoppe said.

The renovations cost the college about \$2 million, Assistant Vice President of Facilities and Campus Services Duncan Pollock said.

To pay for the renovations, Pollock said the college used funds from startup costs with Bon Appétit, who became the college’s food service last year. The college also used deferred maintenance money, a fund used to repair buildings and equipment annually, he said.

The Lion’s Den space takes up the back half of the former Whisky Saigon, running from the elevators in the alley of the Walker Building toward the State Transportation Building. The college has not decided whether they will expand farther into the front half of the building.

“We have some [legal] restrictions on the use of the storefront space—it has to be a retail-related business,” Pollock said. “So, we can’t just take it for Emerson use.”

The Lion’s Den is accessible by a new staircase located by Center Stage and by the elevators behind the Dining Center that now stop on the first level of the Walker Building.

When arriving at the Lion’s Den, students and faculty enter a coffee bar, similar to the Backstage Cafe, with seating. Behind the coffee bar is a grill and main seating space, which mirrors the Center Stage grill options—burgers, hot dogs, chicken sandwiches, and salads—and features high and low tables. In the back of the space is an area with more lounge-style seating options.

Students will be able to use a meal swipe to order from the Lion’s Den grill, Hoppe said.



Students will be able to use both meal swipes and Board Bucks in the new dining space
Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff

“They will have a meal equivalency, like a combo, similar to what is offered at the Max or Paramount Cafe,” Hoppe said. “You can also use Board Bucks and ECCash.”

The coffee bar in the Lion’s Den will also accept Board Bucks and ECCash.

The Lion’s Den is open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. On the weekends, it will be a flexible and bookable space for clubs and members of the community to hold events. The new coffee bar won’t compete with the Backstage Cafe in the morning because of its

later opening, but when Backstage closes at 5 p.m. the Lion’s Den coffee bar will stay open four more hours.

At 9 p.m., the gate between the Dining Center and Center Stage will come down, and the Center Stage grill will continue to operate as a retail operation where students can use a meal swipe, Board Bucks, and ECCash until it closes. Seating in the Lion’s Den will also be available, but the upstairs grill will be closed.

Center Stage will serve food until midnight, and the space will stay open until 2 a.m.

forth between seating areas, Hoppe said. “We want to give Bon Appetit time to figure out how to best utilize all the different prep and food areas,” Hoppe said. “That might be adjusted in the spring based on what they learn in the fall.”

Whisky Saigon, the high-end nightclub which once lined the Boylston Street sidewalk with sparkly red carpets, bouncers, and a noisy line of guests on the weekends, ended their lease with the college earlier this year. The original lease allowed the club to remain in the building until 2022, when Whisky Saigon could have extended their lease through 2032.

Instead of leasing the space to a new tenant, the college decided to use the back half of the building to expand the Dining Center in anticipation of more students on campus, Hoppe said.

“Once the college realized Whisky Saigon was going to vacate their lease, there was a conversation about what the best use of the space [would be],” he said. “We came to the decision pretty quickly that it needed to be for internal college use.”

This semester, the college will enforce new rules regarding swiping in to the Dining Center and Center Stage because of confusion last year, Hoppe said.

“Last year it was really confusing when you walked into Center Stage, whether you were swiping or retailing—could you come in if you weren’t buying anything?” Hoppe said. “It seemed like we never really got that universally known.”

Starting this semester, students will need to use a meal swipe or purchase a meal swipe in order to enter the Dining Center or Center Stage. All students can enter the Lion’s Den—via the elevators or the staircase next to the elevators—without using a swipe, and they can choose to bring their own food.

“If commuters are there, they can get what is offered downstairs [in the Lion’s Den],” Pollock said.

Since students can sit in the Lion’s Den seating area after using a meal swipe in the Dining

Center or Center Stage, the swipe system is now configured to only charge for one meal during meal times. The system will remember that a student swiped recently and use the original swipe to allow students to go back and

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MBTA shutdowns to affect ridership on weekends

Continued from page 1

Assistant Director of Off Campus Student Services Jeff Morris said he thinks the derailments over the summer influenced government officials to accelerate the improvements. He said that, because the closures are only planned for weekends, it shouldn’t severely impact students.

“Thank God it’s only weekends,” he said in an interview. “I think the MBTA would fall apart immediately if this were Monday through Friday, but because it’s only on the weekends, I don’t see it having a huge impact after the first couple weeks.”

Morris lives in Watertown and rides the Red Line everyday to get into work. He said he thinks many Bostonians felt frustrated after this year’s fare hikes.

“People were asking, ‘If you’re increasing our fares, where is this money going? If trains are derailing and constantly late, and overcrowded and the system doesn’t work, why are we still increasing fares?’” he said.

Senior William Van Gelder lives in Cambridge and takes the Red Line to get to Emerson, where he works and takes classes. He said that, even though students don’t attend classes on the weekends, they still need to travel throughout the city.

“I like to travel around, go do things around the city, and see friends, so it’ll be pretty annoying to have to take a bus places,” he said in an interview.

Even though it will take him longer to get places, he said it is nothing but a small nuisance for him.

“In my experience, the shuttle buses are



MBTA patrons wait at the Boylston Street station as a green line train arrives. • Jakob Menendez / Beacon Staff

easier than the city buses because they only stop at the train stops,” he said. “The only hassle is that you have to come up out of the station [to get on the bus], and [the bus] is slower because you’re going through city traffic.”

Morris said this is the first time he’s seen

such a widespread shutdown, but hopes the result is worth it.

“They can’t make anything better unless they have the time and the money to shut down the stations, so it’s a double-edged sword,” he said. “Yes, they have to shut down the trains

all semester, but in an ideal world, when spring comes around, the trains will be safer and cleaner and smoother.”

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College acceptance rate drops to lowest in school history

Anissa Gardizy, *Beacon Staff*

The college’s acceptance rate dropped for the fourth year in a row to about 33 percent as a result of increased applications, a college official said.

“I’m pleased to report that the acceptance rate is the lowest it has ever been in our history,” President M. Lee Pelton said during a faculty meeting.

Vice President for Enrollment Management Ruthanne Madsen said the acceptance rate dropped because of a 19-percent increase in applications for this year—it rose from 12,900 in the fall 2017 application season to 15,352 in the fall 2018 application season.

This increase follows a 24-percent increase during the fall 2017 application season.

“As word of mouth goes out and our marketing message gets bigger and better, it really does help to increase the number of applications that we see,” Madsen said.

Madsen said the upward trend stemmed from a policy change in 2018 that allows students to apply test-optional. Instead of submitting standardized test scores, students have the option to submit a supplemental piece of work, such as a creative project or writing supplement.

“That took down a lot of barriers for students who were looking at Emerson. They had the high school GPA, but they didn’t have the test scores,” Madsen said.

Test-optional applications increased from about 8 percent to 17 percent over the past year.

There are 926 new first-time students that make up this year’s incoming class.

Of the first-time new students, 5 per cent are of two or more races, Madsen said, which is a 2-percent increase from the class of 2022. In fall 2018, 14 percent of the incoming class was Hispanic, and this year the number is 11 percent.

“If someone is admitted and they come to our campus, we want to do everything we can to ensure they see themselves here.”

–Ruthanne Madsen

“That has to do with the fact that we have partnerships with amazing institutions like Paris College of Art, Blanquerna in Barcelona,

The number of black and African-American students in the incoming class is greater than in years past. The class of 2023 has 40 coming in, compared to 34 in 2018 and 29 in 2017.

Students in the incoming class come from 30 countries, which is five more than last year.

Spain, and Franklin University in Switzerland,” Madsen said. “We are getting the message out all over the globe, which is exactly what we want to do.”

The majority of international students—about 73 percent—are from China.

“We do not recruit in China,” Pelton said during the faculty meeting. “This has happened organically on its own.”

For the second year in a row, most students in the incoming class are California residents.

“A lot of smaller, higher-ed institutions in New England are hurting for enrollment, and that is because they were just pulling from the [New England] region,” Madsen said. “We have a different strategy, and it has been in place over the past five, six years, and that is to ensure we

are not a regional campus.”

The college’s acceptance yield—the percentage of students accepted that enroll—is about 19 percent, which is similar to years past, Madsen said.

Madsen said the low yield is due to how easy it is for students to apply to multiple schools.

“It’s very easy for students to apply to various schools with the Common Applications, but when they get admitted they have to make their decision,” she said. “If someone is admitted and they come to our campus, we want to do everything we can to ensure they see themselves here.”

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Resident Assistants hand out keys to incoming students • Chris Van Buskirk / *Beacon Staff*

Fast-casual restaurants to occupy Little Building retail



The college plans to fill the currently vacant Little Building retail spaces with restaurants. Anissa Gardizy / *Beacon Staff*

Diana Bravo, *Beacon Staff*

The college plans to lease seven different spaces in the Little Building to six fast-casual restaurants and hopes to announce the first few leases within a month, according to a college official.

“We’re looking at some really cool tenants that are going to offer a variety of dining experiences so the students will have the ability

to stay within campus but offset the times when they just don’t feel like going to the dining center to eat,” Assistant Vice President of Facilities and Campus Services Duncan Pollock said.

Pollock said all the restaurants will accept ECCash, as per the terms of their lease, but they will not accept Board Bucks or meal swipes.

“Most if not all of the six tenants will be restaurants for our community as well as the

people who work and visit the downtown corridor,” President M. Lee Pelton said at the Faculty Institute Meeting on Tuesday. “I often get asked ‘Who are the tenants?’ and my answer has been and will remain for a while, ‘I’m not telling.’”

The leases will start Jan. 2 and last ten years with the option of a five year extension Pollock said. After 15 years, the college and the tenants will renegotiate the lease should the restaurants

choose to stay. Pollock also said the businesses will likely take a few months to open because they have to furnish the spaces.

Pollock refused to state specifics on lease prices citing ongoing negotiations, but said the college is offering the spaces around the market rate, which he said is \$50-\$100 per square foot.

Although the college has seven spaces available to lease, Pollock said one tenant will likely take two spaces, leaving the college with

“Most if not all of the six tenants will be restaurants for our community as well as the people who work and visit the downtown corridor.”

–M. Lee Pelton

six tenants. The college has 13,885 square feet available to lease, which means the college could make between \$694,250 and \$1,388,500 from the spaces in total.

“I feel like it’s going to be a really great option for students to have,” SGA Executive Vice President Will Palauskas said.

Pollock said the college started working on these deals in June 2019, because the college wanted the sidewalk in front of the Little Building to be in the best possible condition when the businesses open.

“[Finding tenants] is kind of driven around the sidewalk project ... We didn’t want tenants to move in while the sidewalk is all dug up,” Pollock said.

Anissa Gardizy contributed reporting to this

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News

Protesters, ideologies clash during Straight Pride Parade



The Straight Pride Parade, an event previously condemned by President M. Lee Pelton, passes by Piano Row on Emerson’s campus. • Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff

Stephanie Purifoy, Belen Dumont, Anissa Gardizy, and Jacob Seitz, *Beacon Staff*

Boston’s first Straight Pride Parade transformed the city’s downtown into scenes of contentious encounters and conflicting ideologies on Saturday.

The parade divided city streets between participants and protestors, separated by metal barricades and law enforcement. Marchers began to gather in Copley Square around 9:30 a.m., alongside about 50 police officers from the Boston Police Department. The officers wore crowd-control helmets for the parade.

Several hundred people gathered at City Hall Plaza at 9 a.m. in protest of the Straight Pride Parade, some wrapped in Pride flags and carrying posters.

M i l o Yiannopolous, the Grand Marshal of the parade, made an appearance in Copley Square around noon. The processions, led by a float decorated with dozens of signs in support of President Trump, set off down Boylston Street shortly after Yiannopolous emerged. Patriotic music blasted from speakers as participants made their way through downtown.

The parade turned at Tremont Street before making its way up to City Hall where the organizers held a rally. Boston Police shut down all of the streets along the parade route and put up barriers and security checkpoints.

Multiple fights broke out along the parade route as protesters clashed with both police and attendees. Boston Emergency Medical Services transported five people. A spokesperson for the BPD said 34 individuals were arrested and four officers were injured.

At one point, police attempted to move down Congress Street only to clash with protestors—throwing at least four on the ground and zip-tying their wrists.

“I don’t feel that it’s about being an oppressed minority at all. I think it’s just being proud of who you are.”

–John Camden

John Camden, of New Hampshire, said attending the parade was his first time celebrating his straight sexuality.

“I don’t feel that it’s about being an oppressed minority at all. I think it’s just being proud of who you are,” Camden said.

The parade organizers stated on their website that straight people are an oppressed majority, but multiple participants told The Beacon that they have never been discriminated against because of their sexuality.

“No one is out here saying, ‘You’re straight, that’s evil,’” Elizabeth Maxwell, of Rhode Island, said. “The only thing I can think of is how the media produces content for the general public, like the Gillette ad. They alienated their core audience [by marketing to LGBTQ+ people.]”

James Harrington, of Lowell, attended the parade with his 8-year-old daughter, who carried a “Make Normalcy Normal Again” sign. He would not say whether he supported LGBTQ+ rights, but said that he had never felt disadvantaged as a straight person.

President M. Lee Pelton said in a phone interview that he is away from campus today but has been getting updates on the events.

“I trust the broader community and the students to behave and protest responsibly. We’re on the right side of this and can speak with moral clarity and candor that [the parade goers] cannot,” he said.

Pelton denounced the event in a community-wide email, calling it a “perversion” and a “desecration of beauty, truth, and generosity.” Organizers of the parade responded to Pelton’s comments at a Thursday press conference claiming the president’s comments put their safety at risk.

“I’m very clear that when this ugliness rears its head we need to speak clearly and call it what it is,” Pelton said in the interview.

The police walked along the parade route inside of the barricades with the participants,

and some officers walked the route outside of the barricades with the protesters. Shouting and yelling between parade participants and protesters increased in intensity as the procession moved toward Boston Common.

Emerson student Emma Sawyer, a freshman, leaned up against the barricade as the parade passed by Little Building.

“Unfortunately it’s not surprising, but I really appreciated our school’s response to this and I feel really safe here in front of my dorm and protected by the police here,” she said. “This stuff is happening everywhere. It’s becoming some kind of reality which is just so terrible.”

Through the duration of the parade, the college locked all exterior doors and required students and faculty to tap in for entry. The college also closed the front Dining Center entrance and the bookstore during the parade. The college did not allow guests during the parade.

F o r m e r SGA Treasurer Candidate and sophomore Brady Baca protested the parade and said the demonstration was an attempt by the organizers to prove how they are oppressed for being straight.

“I think that it’s very clearly just an attempt to continue this whole narrative that straight, white people are the real ones who are oppressed in America,” he said. “It’s similar to what they did in Portland and at the other straight pride parade last weekend.”

He said that directing the parade to pass Emerson was an attempt to intimidate students.

“I think it’s a pretty bold-faced attempt to intimidate the incoming freshman class and validate the right-wing groups on campus,” he said.

Marcher Eli Larabee said he talked to police who were expecting violence and arrests because of the parade. Larabee said he attended

the parade with his wife and was worried about potential conflict.

“I support LGBT rights and will continue to fight for them,” he said. “I also think constitutional rights are something that need to be celebrated—I have the right to be here, as do the protesters, as long as they’re peaceful.”

When the parade reached City Hall Plaza, participants were directed toward a security checkpoint that led to a stage set up beside City Hall. BPD checked bags, confiscated flags and signs on sticks, and used handheld metal detectors.

Once a group of approximately 150 participants arrived at the stage, the organizers and speakers began their speeches.

Speaker Teresa Richenberger openly condemned gay people with homophobic rhetoric.

“They like to call us radicals. It’s about time for us to get radical,” she said. “My God, my God, they are telling our children it’s okay to be gay. I have a right to say it’s not okay to be gay.”

A group of several hundred protestors looked on outside of the police barricades as the speakers took the stage, chanting at the participants and trying to disrupt the rally.

At 2:44 p.m., Emerson College Police Chief Robert Smith sent an email to the college community, indicating that the parade had concluded. He said college operations would resume at 3 p.m.

The college unlocked exterior doors,

“I think that it’s very clearly just an attempt to continue this whole narrative that straight, white people are the real ones who are oppressed in America.”

–Brady Baca

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Milo Yiannopoulos looks onto a crowd during the Straight Pride Parade.
Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff



An individual is detained by Boston police prior to the parade’s arrival on campus.
Montse Landeros / Beacon Correspondent



A group of individuals clashes with police during the Straight Pride Parade.
Christine Park / Beacon Correspondent



Students gather and lock arms in front of the Colonial Building as the Straight Pride Parade arrived on campus. • Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff



Parade goers hold a sign at Copley Square prior to the start of the parade.
Anissa Gardizy / Beacon Staff



A counter protester waves the transgender flag prior to the arrival of the Straight Pride Parade.
Kyle Bray / Beacon Staff

Editorial

Maintaining student activism surrounding Title IX

Emerson College has a long, complicated—and, at times, bleak—history with incidents of sexual misconduct and Title IX, the federal civil rights law that regulates gender-based discrimination and harassment in universities across the country.

In 2013, two students filed a federal complaint against the college and its policies with the Federal Office of Civil Rights. This was followed by multiple reports on Emerson’s shortcomings, prolonged unoccupied positions in the Title IX office, and continued protests from student activists.

These tensions reached their peak in April when an anonymous group posted a list of alleged abusers on the Little Building scaffolding.

Now the college is in the process of reviewing its sexual misconduct policy, but will not implement any revisions until the U.S. Department of Education issues its final regulations for federal Title IX guidance. In 2016, the administration began reviewing the sexual misconduct policy, and recommended changes were sent to the College Policy Review Committee in July 2018, where they are now pending approval. All the while, the Federal Office of Civil Rights continues its backlogged investigation into the 2013 complaint.

As the semester kicks into full gear and students’ time is overtaken with classes, extracurriculars, and social activities, it will be easy for the sense of urgency surrounding Title IX and its shortcomings to fade. But the movement for progress and increased transparency within the Title IX office shouldn’t stall in the new year.

On Sept. 3, Presidential Communications sent out a campus-wide email announcing the new formation of a Title IX oversight committee. The group consists of five students, three staff members, four faculty members, and four other members serving as part-time advisers, all appointed by the school, according to the email.

The group will review the College’s procedure for handling interpersonal “sexual misconduct” incidents among students. The current procedure was revised and adopted five years ago. But the committee will not be involved in the

decision-making of any Title IX cases. The appointed committee will also examine the implications and motivations behind the string of incidents that occurred at the end of the spring 2019 semester.

When we become overwhelmed with the realities of college, students might be tempted to pass the baton of responsibility and activism entirely to the Title IX oversight committee. And as productive as the group may be in the upcoming future, that does not mean we should abandon our continued activism and reporting.

The student body should continue talking about this issue—in classes, in campus spaces, and with their peers—thereby keeping it at the forefront of both the campus and national conversation. Even more importantly, students should closely follow the actions of the administration and oversight committee, ensuring that their work ignites impactful and relevant change. Without the watchful eye of students, it will be impossible to ensure any changes the committee makes are more than superficial.

Even with students’ unrelenting scrutiny of Title IX proceedings, it is likely that Emerson’s revision of its sexual misconduct policies will still take some time. But student voices will continue to be vital in times like this. Only then can the student body ensure the school creates equitable and fair Title IX policies and processes.

Editorials are written solely by Editor-in-Chief Chris Van Buskirk, Managing Editors Abigail Hadfield, Kyle Bray, Dylan Rossiter, Opinion Editor Diti Kohli, and Deputy Opinion Editor Ziqi Wang without consultation from other staff members, and does not influence any stories. Op-Eds reflect the views of only their authors, not The Berkeley Beacon.

Editorial Cartoon

by the Editorial Board
illustration by Ally Rzesza



The college forgot to Google the name of its new dining space before opening.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you want to respond to, or share an opinion about, an article in the Beacon, you can write a short letter to the editor. Email it to letters@berkeleybeacon.com. Please note that letters may be edited. Submissions for print must be shorter than 250 words.

The Berkeley Beacon

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Opinion

Online shopping: Put your money where your mouth is

Kaitlyn Bryson

Bryson is a junior public relations major and a Beacon correspondent.

In a world filled with instant gratification, personally tailored advertisements, and one-click shopping, it can be easy to overlook how our purchases impact others.

But our lack of knowledge is exactly what large corporations bank on. They profit from the customer’s ignorance and the allure of low prices and convenience. This manifests in the form of excessive online shopping, a problem overwhelming the Emerson mailroom.

When I first applied to work in the mailroom at the beginning of my freshman year, I figured it would be an easy job with flexible hours and would allow me to make enough money to cover my everyday expenses. I never could have imagined how students’ excessive online shopping could impact the workers, and how much worse this purchasing habit would get over the course of my college career.

According to Collegiate Press, in 2009, the yearly incoming package count was 34,900. This number increased by 64 percent, reaching 54,138 packages, with the opening of 2 Boylston Place in 2017.

The monthly average package count also increased. In 2018, the average package count per month sat at 4,608—up from under 3,000 packages in 2009. Since Little Building opened this August, the count has peaked at approximately 5,000 packages in only its first month.

These numbers reflect the harsh reality me and the other workers in the mailroom experience six days a week. Whether it’s during a post-class rush, freshman move-in, or the start-of-semester-book-ordering fiascos, these statistics represent the repetitive logging of packages past closing hours by the full-time workers with families at home waiting for them.

Dante Flores, a recent Emerson graduate and my former mailroom coworker, said the four years he worked in the mailroom helped him understand the unfair labor practices that molded his leftist political views. He said he watched the numbers of incoming packages

increase throughout the years and felt the work environment becoming more stressful than when he first started the job.

“The rushes are heavier,” Flores said in a phone interview. “It feels like, longer too. I’ll never forget the day last year around this time where we had four student workers, some [temporary workers], and all three full-timers working around the clock and we were only barely keeping pace.”

Not only are school mailroom workers affected by this increase, but also countless factory workers throughout the United States and the world. In a recent episode from The Daily, Amazon factory workers were interviewed to speak about their experiences on the line.

Tasha Murrell, a warehouse employee, told The Times a woman died on the job but the manager said, “We still have to keep working, the customers want their stuff.”

As the demand for speedier deliveries rises, the pressure on workers intensifies. When we click the “two-day” delivery option, we are expecting workers paid minimum wage with

“When we click the “two-day” delivery option, we are expecting workers paid minimum wage with little to no benefits to assemble our purchase in near-impossible time”

little to no benefits to assemble our purchase in near-impossible time. Then after, we expect mailroom workers to log these packages quicker because we have been led to believe we deserve instant gratification.

Even more notably, these numbers represent the mindless yet growing consumerist nature Americans bathe in and refuse to recognize.

In order to be able to prepare for the opening



“We are at the point in time where we would rather order toilet paper than walking down the street” • Illustration by Ally Rzeska / Beacon Staff

of the Little Building, the mail staff had to move all packages for incoming freshmen into the new building due to lack of room in the Colonial location. This move took five days, which stole valuable time from workers’ other responsibilities like delivering letter mail and logging packages.

As someone that deals with a lot of the customer relations, the backlog of packages from the move also resulted in a lot of impatient, and often rude, interactions with students coming in to demand their mail.

I have overheard students who puzzle over how many packages they ordered. Many even order items that are accessible in physical nearby stores. Not only does this confusion make my job more difficult, it also shows how deep the online shopping black hole goes.

We are at the point in time where we would rather order toilet paper than walking down the street, and that scares me.

Speedy deliveries also come with a plethora of negative environmental impacts. According to the annual sustainability report from UPS,

one of the biggest enablers of the e-commerce boom, the company emitted 13.8 million metric tons of CO2 while delivering 5.1 billion packages by ground and air in 2017. These numbers do not include the emissions from other major mail carriers like USPS, Amazon, or FedEx, nor the extracted resources used to package these goods.

I understand that change takes education and gradual habit-breaking, and I am not asking Emerson students to boycott online shopping entirely and immediately. However, I urge the student population to think before you purchase.

Ask yourself: Can I find this item down the street? Do I need instant two-day delivery, or can I wait a little longer? Do I have to get this item off of Amazon?

We brand ourselves as a student body of activists but fail to recognize the repercussions of our materialistic consumption. It is time we put our money where our mouth is, and stop excessive shopping online.

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The disparity between looking and feeling like a person of color

Ziqi Wang

Wang is a junior journalism major and the Beacon’s deputy opinion editor.

I knew I wanted to go to college in America as early as middle school. In China, I went to an international school, and I spent my junior year of high school as an exchange student in Michigan where I even studied Advanced Placement US History.

I thought I knew enough about this country to live a meaningful life here like a “real” American, or at least I thought so for the first two years of my college life. I made friends, got a job in the Journalism Department, gained internship experience, and even found myself a boyfriend.

But before my Resident Assistant training, I never thought I’d ask myself if I can truly count myself as a person of color, or POC.

During training in August, I attended a panel with Intercultural Student Affairs, International Student Affairs, and the Social Justice Center. The panel talked about the concept of being an ally.

One of the students spoke about how she sometimes felt that, as a black person, if she wants to educate others on the POC experience, then she has to relive the trauma in her life, and it’s hard to be both the victim and the diplomat.

I was absolutely stunned by her words. Suddenly, I understood that the phrase “person of color” has another layer of meaning beyond what it sounds like. I asked myself, have I felt this way before? If not, am I even a person of color? If not, do I really understand what it is to be a person of color?

I’ve never experienced any of these suppressions, aggressions, or microaggressions. For the first time, I admitted to myself that I might not be a person of color in the way that most Americans view the term.



“It took me two years to understand that America is not the same as back home, and that there are more conflicts than I could ever imagine.” • Illustration by Ally Rzeska

I had learned about most of the troubling history of black people in the United States. I learned about the Civil Rights Movement, about the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and about Martin Luther King Jr., and I like to think I knew their struggle and understood their need to fight for equality and basic rights. But now as I look at this knowledge I have on people of color, I find my understanding is rather superficial.

Emerson admitted me as a student of color, and I fall under the category of both an Asian and an international student. Most of the time, I naturally separate myself from American students and label myself as an international student. I look at American students, and I subconsciously categorize them as the same people. I see they have different skin colors

and know that they have different cultural backgrounds—but for me, they are all Americans.

Liza Xiao, a sophomore international student from China, said she also feels this is a rather awkward in-between situation.

“For people like us, we know about POC, but it’s funny because at first I didn’t even know,” Xiao said. “Am I yellow, brown, or am I what?”

One of Xiao’s friends who is black once told her that she experienced racism from a group of Korean tourists on a ferry before, and that they were looking at her and taking selfies, trying to get her into the pictures as well.

“I thought it could be offensive, but I would not call it racism,” Xiao said. “We grew up in a homogenous area, and seeing someone that’s

different from us, it’s more of just unfamiliarity and curiosity.”

What she said is the truth. It took me two years to understand that America is not the same as back home, and that there are more conflicts than I could ever imagine. For those people who’ve only been seeing POC communities on TV or other media, it’s even harder for them to be sensitive around POC and imagine the underlying social problems in the US.

Of course, most international students are not like the tourists. We have been educated in American history, culture, and society. Some of us even identify as POC. However, that doesn’t mean the school or other people can automatically place us in the POC community.

Xiao said she hopes the school will collaborate with International Student Affairs and the International Student Peer Mentors to help students from around the world get in touch with the POC community. It’s wrong to assume racism and other forms of aggression towards POC are a part of everyone’s life, and real stories and experiences could teach us more than books.

For me, I think that it’s important for the school and students to help international students validate their feelings of not belonging to the POC community. Many of us come here just for the learning experience, and that’s okay.

And I still ask myself if I am truly a person of color, and what the meaning and responsibility that comes with it is. I think about the definition of an ally, if I understand the true meaning of this role, and if I can ever be somebody’s ally. At the end of the day, it’s more of my decision than somebody else’s, but this “identity crisis” will always be on my mind.

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Living Arts

Haus of Emerson named first-ever collegiate vogue ballroom

Taina Millsap, *Beacon Staff*

Christopher Henderson-West initially met with vogue instructor London Lewis to bring vogue workshops to Emerson. About a month after their initial conversation, Henderson-West and Lewis threw the first Emerson Vogue Kiki Ball, earning the Haus of Emerson the title of first-ever collegiate ballroom house in the U.S.

Senior and president of Emerson’s Advancement Group for Love and Expression, Henderson-West became Selane DeHeaux Darling, the Haus of Emerson mother—leading the house while providing guidance and support to its members. Lewis is the father of the House of Mulan, a KiKi scene-based vogue ballroom house. Together, they created an event featuring competitions where groups called houses perform in categories such as face, runway, and vogue.

“It was a good fit and we were doing something real different”

-London Lewis

“We both had the same vision, and that’s when we knew right then it was a good fit and that we were doing something real different,” Lewis said.

The Haus of Emerson hopes to educate people on the history of voguing, an LGBTQ+ subculture where participants are mainly young people of color performing on the stage.

“We’re hoping it’ll bring awareness and strengthen the community, and so far the responses from the scene have been very good,” Henderson-West said. “We have also gotten a few messages from other schools on what they want to do; in a similar fashion, they’re looking to start their own houses.”

During the planning process, the founders said they realized that this had never been officially done by a college.

“I was shook, because I hadn’t heard of anything like it,” Henderson-West said. “The way I found out was that I asked [Lewis] and he asked some of the other house mothers and

fathers about it, and they said, ‘Yeah there has never been a college-based ballroom house,’ and we were all really surprised.”

The title of the first collegiate vogue ballroom house nationwide comes with uncertainty, Henderson-West said, but also creates opportunities for the founders to pave their own path in the scene.

“I’m not sure exactly what it means in terms of the long-standing impact of the title, but I know that we have our ideas in terms of what we want it to mean, in terms of really helping the community grow and become stronger,” Henderson-West said. “We want to educate people on the history of this queer subculture that’s often appropriated and whitewashed with mainstream audiences.”

Lewis assisted in every step of planning and carrying out the event and said he can’t wait for what comes next.

“I hope to be coming back to Emerson this upcoming year quite frequently, throwing workshops, balls and also getting [the Haus of Emerson] to come out to the balls in the main scene happening all over the United States,” Lewis said. “And hopefully in the future I’m trying to plan college tours too, so Emerson can show other colleges how they can expand and become a part of ballroom culture.”

Auditions will be held on Sept. 7 for those interested in joining the house. In addition, the Haus of Emerson hopes to work with Intercultural Student Affairs to have regular vogue workshops.

The Haus of Emerson also plans on participating in runway and face categories at the Porcelain Ball, a main scene vogue ball, according to Henderson-West.

“We’re also preparing for a ball on [Sept. 7] that we’re going to make a part of the audition process,” Henderson-West said. “And there’s



Henderson-West (left) founded the Haus of Emerson and serves as the house mother. *Courtesy of Christopher Henderson-West*

a major ball in New York called the Porcelain Ball, hosted by the Haus of Miyake Mugler, and Rihanna is going to be there judging, so we’re preparing for that as well.”

Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Sharon Duffy is the Haus of Emerson’s official godmother. She said she is excited to be able to provide support to the house as they grow.

“I would envision taking on this godmother role very much in the same way that a godparent may, to be making sure these traditions are being passed from one generation to the next and that there’s a space and opportunities,” Duffy said. “But really letting the students take the lead of where they want to go with this.”

During a conversation with Tamia Jordan, director of intercultural student affairs, Duffy discussed the goals the faculty hopes the Haus of Emerson will achieve.

“We would love to have our students competing in other KiKi balls as well to really see the wide range of talent, culture, and music, and get a real appreciation for this art form, to bring an awareness and education of these different cultures to light,” Duffy said. “And I’d hope our colleagues and other students at colleges in the local area would get interested too.”

Lewis said he is excited about the progress the Haus of Emerson members have made so far and what their future as a house will look like.

“[The Haus of Emerson] is rising so well and so beautifully,” Lewis said. “I’m just so proud of them and their growth, and we’ve definitely got some secrets coming up shortly.”

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Adam Driver doppelgänger asks the actor to buy him a sandwich

Continued from page 1

“I thought, what’s a weird request I could have and what’s the lowest thing I could ask for?” Schifano said in a phone interview from Phoenix, Arizona.

During his final semester at Emerson, Schifano took classes at Emerson’s Los Angeles campus, where he held an internship at Dark Horse Entertainment. Schifano works as a server in Phoenix while he saves money to make the move back to Los Angeles.

Schifano said if Driver saw his account and agreed to buy him a sandwich, he would want

Driver to order Schifano a sandwich that he himself would eat.

“I guess my ideal scenario would be me and him in a sandwich shop eating and chatting a bit,” Schifano said. “I would even be fine if he Venmo’d me for it.”

Inspired by other online celebrity impersonators, Schifano utilized the similarities between him and Driver to create the account.

“One day I was watching a Buzzfeed video and there was this woman who kind of looked like Emma Watson, who had made a full career out of her ability to look like someone else,” he said.

Schifano noted one flaw in his quest to attract Driver to the page: not only does Driver not have an Instagram account, but he does not use any social media platforms.

“The odds of him seeing this are very low,” Schifano said. “I also just genuinely find it funny, doing these posts knowing that he’ll never see them. He’s said in interviews that social media scares him.”

In July, entertainment website The A.V. Club published an article featuring Schifano and his photo recreations. Schifano said the article helped him gain over 250 new followers while also drawing in a flood of hate comments.

One of Schifano’s favorite comments included someone calling him a “Kylo Rental.” He said the criticism doesn’t bother him.

“I just laugh it off. It’s the very basic thing of people on the internet who are angry someone else is trying to do something publicly,” Schifano said. “Everyone does something to get attention to some extent.”

Former Emerson student and visual media arts major Abigail Baldwin knew about Schifano’s account before she actually met him in person at school.

“I met him through my roommate at the time,” Baldwin said. “I’ve always thought his account was really fun. I don’t think he really looks like Adam, but that’s the fun of it. I love it.”

Despite others’ observations of him, Schifano echoed Baldwin in saying he doesn’t see himself as the spitting image of Driver.

“I’ve stared at his face and my face for hours,” Schifano said. “He’s huge and muscular and I am a scrawny, lanky, tall man. There are jawline differences, eye color differences. Because of having to look so acutely at those I know how much I don’t look like him.”

Schifano said editing the photos has improved his photoshop skills. Schifano’s friends, who are skilled in photography and art,

have assisted him in creating the photos.

“I shoot at my friends’ homes,” Schifano said. “We just move everything across the floor for like an hour, set up a white background and use lights or whatever we have to take these photos.”

He said the photos are a way for him to continue the type of art that he worked on at school, but without the restrictive structure of classes and assignments.

Schifano, who graduated with a visual and media arts degree, credits Emerson professor Gabrielle Follett with helping him develop his passion for avant-garde art and giving him the confidence to pursue his interest in film.

“She taught me how to understand and think about experimental film,” Schifano said. “She really opened my eyes about how half of watching something is how you react to it. It’s fine to watch an experimental film and not really get it. The most important thing is what you get out of it.”

Follett said she still keeps in contact with Schifano.

“He makes work that’s stylistically sophisticated, emotionally intelligent, and, often, hilariously funny,” she said in an interview. “I’m always excited to see what he’s working on next—the last few emails we exchanged included Ben learning to use a flame thrower and us musing over how it could be used to make art.”

Schifano said in the future he plans on recreating one of Driver’s scenes from the movie “Inside Llewyn Davis,” where Driver plays a country singer.

“I view what I’m doing as performance art,” Schifano said. “That’s what the [Driver] photos mean to me. It’s an easy enough way to feel like I’m still being creative.”

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Schifano (left) said he had no idea how Driver (right) managed to fit the entire orange in his mouth. He had to cut his in half to make it fit. • *Courtesy of Ben Schifano*

Living Arts

Sophomore wins for St. Louis team at international poetry competition

Cassandra Coyer, *Beacon Staff*

Six teens sat cowered in a compact dorm room in Las Vegas, whispering poetry to each other for hours at a time so their competitors would not overhear. It’s a vital part of the St. Louis team’s strategy for the 2019 Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival that led them to victory.

Hundreds of young poets from around the world packed into the dorms of the University of Nevada on July 17 for four days of competition. Among the poets, Emerson sophomore Zack Lesmeister attended the competition for the third time. This year, Lesmeister and the St. Louis team brought the win back to their city for the first time.

The competition is powered by Youth Speaks, an organization that empowers young minds to use their platform for social change, and which attracts young poets between 13 and 19 years of age to compete. The artists perform their original pieces on stage for three minutes and are scored by a panel of judges based on the quality of the writing, the content of the piece and the performance, according to Youth Speaks. Their poems can be accompanied by choreography, movements, and costumes, but no props other than a microphone.

“It’s like spoken chess—it’s the best way to describe it,” Lesmeister said in a phone interview from St. Louis. “Slam is a game at the end of the day ... You really have to have a strategy, and what poem you throw up should really be dependent on what the poem before you was about, what the room is feeling, how the judges are feeling, and what type of poems they’re reacting well to. And so I play it like a game.”

The poets competing at Brave New Voices are champions from each participating city—Lesmeister scored among the top 15 poets of St. Louis. He participated in a citywide grand championship in February, where judges selected him and five other artists to make the St. Louis team for the Brave New Voices competition.

During the days leading up to the competition, the team practiced day and night to perfect their performances. Lesmeister recalls having to rehearse their poems in a whisper so the other teams sleeping in the nearby dorms wouldn’t

overhear their performances.

“There’s a lot of strategy behind what topics you choose, and how you use them,” Lesmeister said, laughing. “And I don’t really want to give all this strategy away.”

Majovah Bastien, one of the assistant coaches for the 2019 St. Louis team, became a coach after participating in the Brave New Voices competition himself for two years before aging out in 2018 when he turned 19.

“I wanted to go again ... I wanted my team and my city to go all out and be the best that they can be,” Bastien said in a phone interview from St. Louis. “And make sure they were doing everything in their power to represent our city in a really good way.”

Bastien praised the competition for being an inclusive and diverse event bringing together poets from different countries and backgrounds, all sharing the same passion.

Bisa Adero, second assistant coach and 2016 St. Louis Youth Poet Laureate, explained that, despite the uplifting energy and camaraderie of Brave New Voices, poets can’t forget it’s a competition.

“We work on strategies,” Adero said in a phone interview from St. Louis. “That’s what you’ve got to do when you go to Brave New Voices.”

After coming close to victory last year and losing in the semifinals, the team stood out this summer and took home the victory.

“We knew how to get them to the finals,” Adero said.

Before accepting the assistant coach position, Adero wanted to be sure the people on the team were not only going for the experience, but also to win.

The poets on the St. Louis team were the same for four years until last year. Adero said the new group brought a diverse range of personalities and backgrounds, both with the poets and coaches, and these differences made the team’s performance stronger.

During the final stage against Chicago, Sacramento, and Newark, the St. Louis team performed a piece on school shootings, one on the Pulse nightclub shooting, an ode to single mothers, and a piece about slavery reparations.

“The poets did it for themselves,” Bastien said. “The poets did it for their families. But I think we all did it for our city, because our city



Sophomore Zack Lesmeister and the St. Louis team won the 2019 Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival, bringing home a brand new title for the city. Jakob Menendez / *Beacon Staff*

is home. It was a really amazing, overwhelming feeling when they announced St. Louis.”

The poem about single mothers resonated with Adero so much she tattooed one of the lines on her arm, which reads, “My mother isn’t afraid of death. Death is afraid of my mother.”

As a Vietnamese poet, Lesmeister said he initially did not like the craft in high school because the poetry included in the curriculum was mainly canonized and written by a whitewashed demographic. By participating in speech and debate his sophomore year of high school, Lesmeister found Vietnamese poets he could relate to, such as Paul Tran and Hieu Minh Nguyen.

“That was the first time I really connected with poetry,” Lesmeister said. “From that moment on, I started writing.”

Now that he’s attending college in Boston, Lesmeister said he’s thinking about the next

steps in his poetry slam journey. He said he plans on competing in the National Poetry Slam on the Boston team and joining the College Unions Poetry Slam Invitational Emerson team.

Lesmeister explained that, while bigger cities like Los Angeles and New York provide stronger resources and well-funded programs to young poets, the St. Louis team worked hard to achieve this victory.

“It means so much to bring this win back to our city,” Lesmeister said. “And just because, you know, no one really looks at St. Louis like a city that can make something that can produce people that could be creative and be successful artists, or successful in whatever field. So it was an awesome moment to force other cities to look at St. Louis in a way that’s, like, you shouldn’t look over us and you can’t look over us.”

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Read it and weep: LGBTQ kids deserve queer-friendly books



Katie Redefier is a sophomore journalism major, deputy lifestyle editor, and the Beacon’s literary columnist.

During high school, my school district in southern Delaware removed The Miseducation of Cameron Post by Emily M. Danforth from their summer reading list for incoming freshmen. They cited “inappropriate language” as the reason for removal, but considering the book is a lesbian coming-of-age story, most of my hometown residents and the author of the book herself didn’t believe the reason for removal was solely based on curse words.

I read The Miseducation of Cameron Post during this controversy, and I remember feeling refreshingly connected to the characters. It made my queer thoughts feel more normal seeing them printed on the pages of a book and not just on my Tumblr dashboard. Kids like me deserve accessible LGBTQ+ literature so they can have the characters to look up to that heterosexual kids always had.

While keeping up with popular literature, I’ve noticed a rise in popularity of books that feature LGBTQ+ characters and plot lines since the early 2010s. NBC reported that, although major publishing companies like Simon & Schuster don’t track the number of publications featuring LGBTQ+ characters, they noticed an observable rise in these books’ publication in recent years.

Author Malinda Lo reported in 2017 that the number of LGBTQ+ young adult novels published is growing exponentially. According to her study, major publishing companies published 29 LGBTQ+ young adult books in 2013. In the following year, 47 books were published—a 49 percent increase. That number continued to rise, reaching 79 LGBTQ+ young adult books published in 2016.

In 2018, the novel Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli became the blockbuster movie Love, Simon, raking in \$66.3 million at the box office. Carry On by Rainbow Rowell, another successful LGBTQ+ young adult book, was named among the “Best Books of 2015” by Time Magazine and achieved a 4.2-star rating on Goodreads.

LGBTQ+ books aren’t just made for teens—the children’s book market has exploded with books featuring LGBTQ+ characters as well. Picture and board books marketed for ages two and up has found huge commercial success. For example, children’s picture book And Tango Makes Three by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson, a story of a same-sex penguin couple hatching an egg together, received a 4.33-star rating on Goodreads and won multiple awards including the American Library Association’s Notable Children’s Books of 2006.

For the most part, people seem accepting of this increasing inclusiveness in children’s books.

Children’s book publishing company Scholastic frequently promotes LGBTQ+ literature to kids and advises schools on how to support queer students. However, there is a loud minority who would rather their children’s books remain free of any themes promoting gender and sexual diversity. For example, Christian advocacy group One Million Moms called for a boycott on Scholastic for “marketing transgender picture books for children” in 2018.

As I spent my past two summers working in a bookstore, middle grade and young adult books became a special interest of mine. At work, I

recommended books I enjoy to customers. I’ve learned the hard way that suggesting books with LGBTQ+ themes is offensive to some parents. In some situations, customers became uncomfortable and avoided eye contact,

keeping their rejection to a nervous “I’ll pass on that one,” while others scoffed and asked me to show them more “age appropriate” books for their children.

In heated discussions I’ve witnessed both on social media and in real life, some adults exclaimed angrily that they would never let their kids read “garbage” LGBTQ+ literature. Hearing these blatantly homophobic statements hurt me, but it helped me understand how important it is that gay literature be accessible to young people. Seeing representation in media is a powerful tool to make LGBTQ+ kids feel less alone in the world by creating a sense

“I remember feeling refreshingly connected to the characters.”

of normalcy around queerness. If queer kids see characters like themselves in the books they read, they’ll feel more like their peers.

Queer literature needs have its own sections in libraries and bookstores, especially in the children’s sections. Publishing companies need to set quotas for the number of books they publish by LGBTQ+ authors and books covering LGBTQ+ topics each year. Schools and universities need to make a bigger effort at promoting LGBTQ+ writing as well, such as including queer-friendly books in their curriculum.

Even Emerson’s undergraduate Writing, Literature and Publishing Department offers no courses centered specifically on LGBTQ+ authors and books. It goes without saying that writing, literature and publishing majors should have the option to study queer literature while obtaining their degree. It is illogical to expect the next generation of writers to portray accurate queer characters and relationships if they have no education on LGBTQ+ literature.

I understand why some adults may not care about the inclusivity of children’s literature. But when I think of how most of the books promoted to me as a kid included exclusively white, neurotypical, and straight characters and plots, I can’t help but want better for the next generation. It’s been said time and time again, but our kids are the future. They deserve books that will make them feel accepted for who they are and that teach them to love all people equally.

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Sports

UPCOMING ACTION

CROSS COUNTRY: Endicott Invitational, Sat.

MEN’S SOCCER: Regis (Mass.) at Emerson, 1 p.m., Sat.

WOMEN’S VOLLEYBALL: Emerson at Suffolk, 6 p.m., Tue.

WOMEN’S SOCCER: Emerson at Wentworth, 6 p.m., Tue.

Freshmen to potentially lead women’s soccer this season

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The Lions opened the season with a 2-1 home win against Regis College (Mass.). Freshmen midfielders Ainslee MacQuarrie and Sage Stack scored their first collegiate goals.

Stack said the freshmen need to figure out how to play with each other and how to play against experienced opponents.

“I just think learning to play with each other, because we’re a super young team and we’re all pretty new,” Stack said. “It’s been hard learning to play with each other, but I feel like we’re all getting comfortable game by game. Playing against girls who are four years older than us is definitely a challenge.”

Jess Frost ‘19 and Paige Haley ‘19 led the team in scoring last season. Frost led the team with eight goals and eight assists while Haley tallied six goals for the Lions. Without Frost and Haley, Suvak said, the team needs other players to step up and meet the expectations the two players set last season.

“I think one of the biggest changes is that we have a substantially smaller squad,” Suvak said. “We’re playing with a very focused group of players and it’s risky in one way that, if we have some injuries, that could cause us some problems.”

“My first impression was that the freshmen are going to give us a run for our money and really help us push this team to the next level.”

- Megan Rose

The preseason coaches’ poll placed the Lions at sixth out of 11 in the NEWMAC.

“We actually don’t mind where they put us,” junior captain and defender Amanda Benavente said. “It’s a great way to show the NEWMAC that they underestimate Emerson, so we’re ready to just surprise them and show the rest of the teams what we got.”



Freshmen Ainslee MacQuarrie and Sage Stack scored their first collegiate goals in the Lions’ home opener on Aug. 30. • Carol Rangel / *Beacon Correspondent*



Sophomore captain Megan Rose had 102 saves last season, which placed her at second in the NEWMAC. • Carol Rangel / *Beacon Correspondent*

Suvak said all three captains this year—Rose, Benavente, and senior forward Veronica Alberts—will bring a different perspective to the team.

“Each one of them in their own right brings a leadership quality to the program,” Suvak said. “Megan [is] a natural leader because of her position as goalkeeper, Amanda is a very passionate and high quality player, [and] Veronica is coming in with three years of experience, and she’s bringing experience knowing what we want as coaches.”

In addition to the new changes on the roster, the team will also alter their approach in both practice and mindset. Rose said the team is focused on improving from last year, and one thing that has changed is in their practice sessions.

“Everyone’s goal is to see ourselves in that final game against whomever that may be, so in order to improve on that, a lot of aspects of our team and the way that we practice have been changing,” Rose said. “We’ve been bringing a lot more intensity and doing a lot more technical stuff to make sure our touches are on point along with our finishing and to make sure we can get the ball in the back of the net as much as possible.”

Benavente said the key to success this season will be how well the team jells together on and off the field.

“The key factors this season will be working as a unit and our effort being there for every game, every practice, no matter what,” Benavente said. “I really like the way our team is headed, so it’s exciting because we’re all still trying to mesh together.”

The team defeated Regis College 2-1 on Aug. 30 and Plymouth State University 2-1 on Aug. 31. The team begins conference play against Mount Holyoke College at home on Saturday, Sept. 21.

The Lions will resume their game against Tufts University tonight at 5:30 p.m. after a lightning delay with Tufts leading 2-0 and 30 minutes left to play. The Lions will play their next game away at Saint Joseph’s College on Saturday at 4:30 p.m.

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Baseball field undergoes \$2 million renovation

Domenic Conte, *Beacon Staff*

The baseball team’s home field at St. John’s Prep in Danvers underwent renovations over the summer, including a fresh layer of turf, a new and improved home run fence, and netting along the fences on the first and third baseline to protect fans from foul balls.

The Pete Frates ’03 field will serve as the Lion’s home field for the second straight season. St. John’s Prep athletic director Jameson Pelky could not accurately pinpoint the total cost of the improvements but he said the high school spent approximately \$2 million on the ballpark.

Pelky said the school prioritized a transition from a portable fence to a built-in one.

“It’s all heavy-duty stuff,” Pelky said. “We’ve never had fencing like this before. Since we’ve had the field, all the portable fencing would get blown over by strong winds and we’d have to keep resetting it up.”

Junior pitcher and last season’s conference strikeout leader Jack Fox said using a portable fence was inconvenient and unprofessional.

“Before a doubleheader, we actually had to build a fence before the game, and it blew down anyway,” Fox said. “Now there’s a real fence, a real mound, and we’re more legit.”

St. John’s will also replace the pitching mound as part of its upgrades.

“The mound was in horrific condition every [game],” Fox said. “I really didn’t want to pitch there last year. I think it was really unserviceable. I would request to not pitch there.”

With the addition of the permanent fence, Pelky said the new field is similar to professional ballparks.

“Its an eight-foot high fence in left field, so if



The field at St. John’s Prep was named last year after ALS Patient and Ice Bucket Challenge Innovator Pete Frates ’03
Domenic Conte / *Beacon Staff*

you hit a home run to left centerfield, it’s 340- to 350-feet deep, plus its eight-feet high,” Pelky said. “Kids hitting home runs in that ballpark are hitting legitimate home runs.”

Until this summer, St. John’s had not replaced the turf since its first installation ten years ago. The ideal lifespan of a layer of turf is five to seven years, according to Emerson

baseball head coach Nick Vennochi.

The Lions won’t play on their new field until the spring season, but Vennochi said they are taking advantage of fall practices early in the school year.

“We’ll be putting in a lot of our stuff, bunts, first and thirds, signs, all that, and obviously it’s the time to see who’s done anything over the

summer,” Vennochi said. “There are freshmen getting integrated into the roster, we scrimmage a lot, and it’s very competition-based. The fall definitely is important.”

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